

## FALLEN HEROES

SPEECH OF

**HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 20, 2004*

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor the heroes who have so far given their lives in Iraq. Every generation of Americans has been asked to leave their farms and towns and cities so that freedom could be spread through the world. As a citizen of this great nation I am here to honor the sacrifice of the fallen in Iraq, and those who before them paid the ultimate price for freedom.

Like their forefathers in World War II, the 23 Floridians who gave their lives in the name of freedom were selfless citizens who answered the call of duty. Among these I would like to personally honor the 4 soldiers from South Florida. I and all of the citizens in my district are thankful for their service.

This nation can never repay the debt owed to these 4 men; their honor and service however, will never be forgotten. Private First Class Charles M. Sims was only 18 when he died in Baghdad on October 3, 2003, Sergeant Edmond L. Randle was 26 when he perished in the north of Taji on January 17, 2004, 1st Lieutenant Christopher J. Kenny was 32 when he fell in Balad on May 3, 2004, and Private First Class Jeremy Ricardo Ewing, who at 22 gave his life in Baghdad on April 29, 2004.

These men remind us that freedom is indeed not free. We must forever be vigilant to the rise of tyranny and be willing to fight it wherever it rises. We must never take for granted our democratic government, we must remember that in places like Cuba, North Korea, and Iran, human beings are still oppressed by their horrible dictators. Let us fight these regimes, until freedom rings in every nation of the world.

God bless all the men and women who gave their lives so that others may live in freedom.

## FALLEN HEROES

SPEECH OF

**HON. XAVIER BECERRA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 20, 2004*

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the members of the United States armed services who make sacrifices daily in defense of our nation, and to pay my respects to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country. As our men and women in uniform continue to answer the highest calling and place themselves in harm's way, their sacrifices have touched us all—regardless of race, economic status, or party lines. We all must honor the bravery and commitment that each of these men and women have so proudly displayed, as well as the courage and resilience of their families and loved ones.

This moment of silence provides an opportunity for us to remind our troops that they remain in our thoughts and prayers. In my own district, California's 31st District, our commu-

nity has suffered the loss of a heroic, noble, and admirable young man—Eric A. Ayon. I wish to take this opportunity to recognize his strength, valor, and bravery as well as the sacrifice endured by his wife, son and family. This family is just one of hundreds whose sacrifice we are recognizing and honoring today.

Let us continue to pay our respects to our fallen soldiers and their families who suffer the greatest loss. Through this honor and remembrance, we can stand unified with gratitude for their sacrifice.

HONORING MAJOR GENERAL  
ROGER E. COMBS**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 3, 2004*

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Major General Roger E. Combs, former Assistant Adjutant General/Air of the Missouri National Guard, Deputy Commander of the Missouri Joint Forces Headquarters, and Air National Guard Assistant to Commander, First Air Force, Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. Major General Combs was recently promoted and re-assigned to a most prestigious position as Director, J-5, at the National Guard Bureau in Washington, DC.

The General has been a member of the armed services since 1968 when he attended Officer Candidate School in the United States Marine Corps. Having served a tour of duty in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot, he is an aircraft commander and has earned ratings as a Naval Aviator and Senior Army Aviator even though he holds no United States Air Force rating. General Combs is nationally recognized for his expertise in long range and strategic planning and is a former member of the ANG Director's Committee of Advisors serving on two committees at the national level. In 2002, he was appointed to the Air Reserve Forces Policy Committee. Major General Combs is a former member of the 139th Airlift Wing located in St. Joseph, MO.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending the career as well as the future of Major General Roger E. Combs, who exemplifies stellar qualities of dedication and service to Northwest Missouri and the United States of America.

## DEMOCRACY ON DRUGS

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 3, 2004*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to draw my colleagues' attention to a new report by Common Cause, "Democracy on Drugs, The Medicare Prescription Drug Bill: A Study on How Government Shouldn't Work." This report does a very good job of highlighting the egregious methods used to gain passage of the Medicare prescription drug legislation. I encourage each of you to review this report to remind yourselves how democracy was trampled in the passage of the Medicare prescription drug law.

The Medicare/Prescription Drug Bill: A  
Study in How Government Shouldn't Work

## DEMOCRACY ON DRUGS

(A report by Common Cause)

## Introduction

Our Constitution reflects the over-arching concern of the Founding Fathers that the rights of the minority be jealously preserved and protected, even in the presence of a strong majority. From start to finish, the \$535 billion Medicare bill passed by Congress and signed by President Bush late last year has been a study in shutting out opposing voices and suppressing the flow of vital information.

This Common Cause report chronicles a series of incidents, large and small, that add up to a consistent effort by the Administration and Congressional leadership to bypass or undermine the rules and laws that are in place to ensure that our government works in an open and accountable manner and that all voices are heard on critical public policy issues.

The Medicare bill (see appendix) is the product of a process that included:

Charges of bribery, delayed votes, inappropriate cabinet member lobbying and censoring of C-SPAN cameras.

The Administration misleading Congress by withholding its own cost estimates for the prescription drug legislation—estimates that greatly exceeded what the President was telling the public. A career civil servant being threatened with his job if he told Congress the truth.

Congressional Members excluded from the House-Senate conference committee that finalized the bill. Only a "coalition of the willing" was invited to participate.

A principal author of the bill was forced to step down as head of a powerful House committee after it was reported that he was negotiating a \$2 million a year lobbying job with the drug industry while he was moving the proposal through his committee. And a key Administration official involved in pushing the legislation was also offered lucrative private sector healthcare jobs.

The drug industry showered Congress with campaign contributions and spent millions of dollars on highly paid lobbyists who swarmed Capitol Hill while the bill was being considered.

A propaganda campaign waged by the Department of Health and Human Services. The Administration paid people to pose as journalists in television segments that praised the benefits of the new Medicare law, and spent tens of millions of dollars on a campaign promoting the new program.

## Charges of Bribery on the House Floor

At the break of dawn on Nov. 22, 2003, Representative Nick Smith (R-MI) was about to cast his vote against a Medicare/prescription drug bill so flawed and controversial that the Republican House leadership held the vote open for three hours while they pressured their own Republican colleagues to vote for the bill. Votes in the House typically are open for 15 minutes.

Strong-arming Members of the House to vote with the leadership is routine business, but what went on in those early morning hours appears to have slid over the line from political pressure to outright bribery.

A Nov. 23, 2003 column written by Rep. Smith appearing on his website reads: "I was targeted by lobbyists and the congressional leadership to change my vote, being a fiscal conservative and being on record as a no vote. Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson and Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert talked to me for a long time about the bill and about why I should vote yes. Other members and groups made